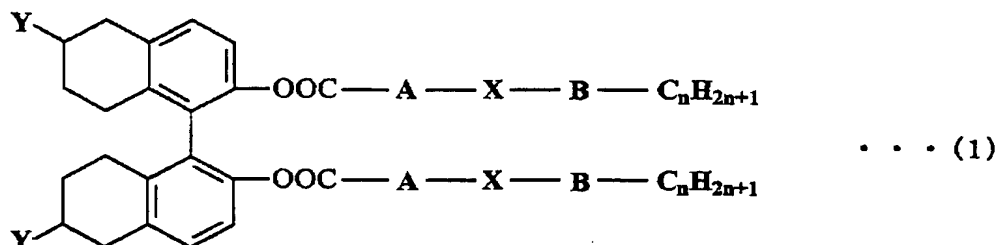


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An optically active compound of the general formula (1),



5 wherein n is an integer of 1 to 10, Y is a hydrogen atom, an alkyl group having 1 to 5 carbon atoms, a phenyl group, a phenyl group substituted with an alkyl group having 1 to 5 carbon atoms or a phenyl group substituted with an alkoxy group having 1 to 4 carbon atoms, X is a single bond (-), -OOC- or -OCH₂-, and each of A and B represents a group or a bond defined in the following (1) to (3),

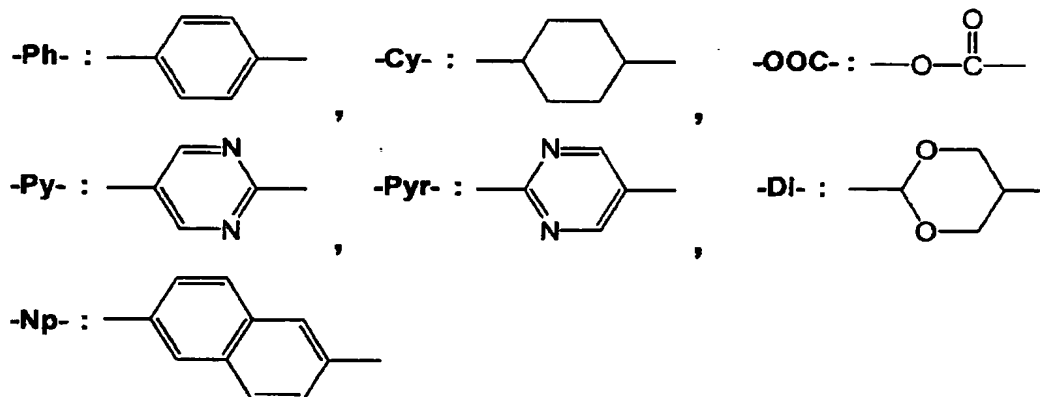
(1) when X is a single bond (-), A is -Cy-, -Ph-, -Py- or -Np-, and when A is -Cy-, B is a single bond, -Cy- or -Ph-Z-,
 15 when A is -Ph-, B is a single bond, -O-, -Cy-, -Ph-Z-, -Pyr-Z-, -Di-, -Ph-Cy-, -Ph-Ph-Z-, -Ph-Pyr-Z- or -Pyr-Ph-Z-, when A is -Py-, B is -Ph-Z-, or when A is -Np-, B is a single bond or -O-,

(2) when X is -OOC-, A is -Ph-, -Np- or -Ph-Ph-, and
 20 when A is -Ph-, B is -Cy-, -Ph-Z-, -Np-Z-, -Cy-Cy-, -Py-Ph-Z-, -Ph-Cy-, -Ph-Ph-Z-, -Ph-Di-, -Ph-Pyr-Z-, -Cy-Ph-Z-, -Ph-OOC-Cy- or -Ph-OOC-Ph-Z-, or when A is -Np- or -Ph-Ph-, B is -Cy- or -Ph-Z-, and

(3) when X is -OCH₂-, A is -Ph-, -Np- or -Ph-Ph-, and
 25 when A is -Ph-, B is -Cy-, -Ph-Z-, -Np-Z-, -Cy-Cy-, -Py-Ph-Z-, -Ph-Cy-, -Ph-Ph-Z-, -Ph-Di- or -Ph-Pyr-Z-, or when A is -Np- or -Ph-Ph-, B is -Cy- or -Ph-Z-,

in which Z is a single bond (-) or -O-, and -Ph-, -Cy-, -OOC-, -Py-, -Pyr-, -Di- and -Np- represent the following
 30 structures, provided that one hydrogen atom of -Ph- may be

replaced with methyl, a fluorine atom or a chlorine atom.



2. The optically active compound of claim 1, which has the
5 general formula (1) in which Y is a hydrogen atom.

3. The optically active compound of claim 1, which has the
general formula (1) in which n is an integer of 3 to 8.

10 4. The optically active compound of claim 1, which has the
general formula (1) in which X is a single bond (-).

5. The optically active compound of claim 1, which has the
general formula (1) in which X is -OOC-.

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6. The optically active compound of claim 1, which has the
general formula (1) in which A is -Ph-.

7. The optically active compound of claim 1, which has the
20 general formula (1) in which B is -Ph-Z-, -Cy-, -Di-, -O-
or -Ph-Cy-.

8. The optically active compound of claim 1, which has a
helical twisting power (HTP) of 50 or more.

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9. A chiral dopant of the general formula (1) recited in
claim 1 for a nematic liquid crystal.

10. A nematic liquid crystal composition containing at least one of optically active compounds of the general formula (1) recited in claim 1.

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11. A liquid crystal display device having the nematic liquid crystal composition recited in claim 10 interposed between substrates having an electrode each.